OLIVER EVANS WAS INVENTOR OF FIRST AMERICAN HORSELESS WAGON

The world moves slowly until it gets a good start, and then it goes with a whiz. Which may be the reason why the world has gone ahead faster and further during the last six thousand years than it did during the previous six million years of its existence. As the Creator of the world had to wait, and no doubt worry, a long, long time before it became fairly started, it is not to be wondered at that men in later times who seek to introduce something new and strange must also wait and worry before it gets a start.

Skipping the hundreds of inventions of the last thousand years, we come to the automobile, which in some respects is the latest of the really great innovations, the latest of the epoch makers, so to speak, because it does mark an epoch in road transportation.

We call it a new thing, but it is not. As early as 1769, one hundred and thirty-four years ago, Joseph Cugnot, a French artillery officer, had a road wagon in operation transporting artillery. It was not a success, but it set an example which its successors of today are still prone to follow, to wit, it ran away, and, butting into a stone fence, wrecked itself. Rude road wagons were also devised by Englishmen a few years later, and one made by Matthew Boulton, partner of James Watt, frightened horse and people just as others do in this day and generation.

In the year 1751, eighteen years before Cugnot's wagon had appeared, Oliver Evans was born at or near the little town of Newport, in the little state of Delaware. Oliver's father and mother were thrifty people of the plain sort, who wanted their boy to become a farmer, and so he was apprenticed, but Oliver's mind was on mechanics, especially on engines that could take the place of horses in drawing wagons, and he left the farm and went home to potter about a blacksmith shop just around the corner from his house.

In time, by the aid of the blacksmith he had constructed an engine model that worked. But he had no money, and he now began to feel the burden of the poor inventor. He knew what he could do, what he had done, but there was no man with money who thought as Oliver did, and he struggled along, as the moneyless must.

He did not confine himself exclusively to steam engines, or road wagons, but invented, among other things, a process for flour making, which almost revolutionized that manufacture, and made him a little money, which he spent at once in developing his other inventions. He also made the first high pressure engine, a long step in advance of the Newcomen and the Watt engine.

At eighteen—that is, in 1769, Cugnot's year—he went to Philadelphia as a wheelwright's apprentice. Philadelphia was no more rapid in those days than its is reputed to be now, and Evans did not get on very fast. In some mysterious manner he managed to eke out an existence, and even to marry, but he could not get his horseless carriage on the road, nor could he prevail upon capitalists to assist him in building a railroad from Philadelphia to New York, one of the great dreams of his life.

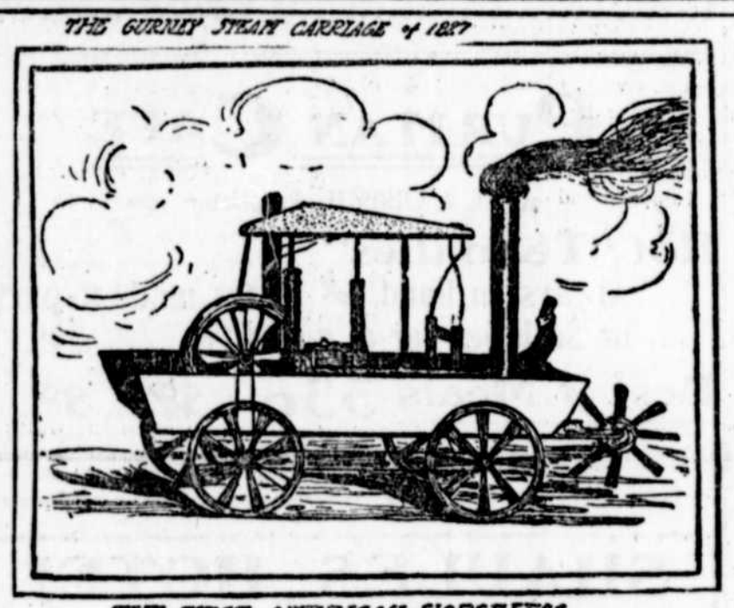
Blind as the world was, this struggling inventor and visionary saw the true light ahead and of it he wrote to a newspaper:

"The time will come when people will travel in stages moved by steam at fifteen to twenty miles an hour. A carriage will leave Washington in the morning, breakfast in Baltimore, dine in Philadelphia and sup in New York the same day. Railways will be laid on iron or wood, or on smooth paths of broken stone or gravel, to travel as well by night as by day. Posterity will not be able to discover why the legislature or congress did not grant the inventor such protection as might have enabled him to put these great improvements in operation sooner, he having asked neither money nor a monopoly of any existing thing."

Evans was right. Posterity has not been able to discover the why or wherefore, nor will its powers of discovery be any larger a hundred years hence. The way of the inventor is up hill all the time, past, present and future. Evans was dead and buried nearly a dozen years before Peter Cooper went down from New York city with an engine he had built at his glue factory, and proved to the managers of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad that an engine could be successfully run over the crooked thirteen miles of their track. And he had been under ground a quarter of a century before his dream of a road between New York and Philadelphia came true.

In 1786 the legislature of Maryland granted him the right of way over

THE GURNEY STEAM CARRIAGE of 1827



THE FIRST AMERICAN HORSELESS CARRIAGE - 1806.

OLIVER EVANS

roads in that state for his horseless wagon, but it was not until 1804 that the actual horseless wagon was demonstrated. In that year the Philadelphia board of health wanted the water cleaned about the docks, and Evans was given a commission to build a machine for the purpose. He put his ideas into iron and turned out his "Orakter Amphibolos," of "Digger," a horseless carriage on the road and a sailless vessel on the water.

He had become so poor that his wife was compelled to spin tow cloth and sell it for the family sustenance, and now, when his wagon was made, it was too heavy, and to reconstruct it the workmen offered their services free to help him out. At last the wagon, the first automobile in America, was completed, and it was put on exhibition at Central Square, where the city hall now stands. Here it was run around the square daily and the public was invited to pay a shilling a head to look at it, one-half the money to go to the workmen, the other half to the inventor, not for his support, but to be expended in further improvements.

After the "Digger" had proved that it could go by its own power on land, it was run down to the Schuylkill, where a wheel was rigged at its stern, and it took to the water, going down to the Delaware river and to its destination, sixteen miles, passing all sailing vessels on the ay.

The "Digger" answered the purpose for which it was built, but it did not open the pocketbooks of the capitalists, and Evans still struggled on. Spectacled and gray at forty, he was wrinkled and old now, but the spirit was strong within him, and he kept on. By some means he secured a shop, where he did engine repairing, when he was not busy with his dreams, and he made a comfortable living for his family. But this was too good luck, and on April, 11, 1819, his snop was burned to the ground, destroying all his papers and his patterns. It was a fatal stroke to this man of sorrows, but he met it bravely, and went at once to New York to secure means for re-establishing himself. There the reaction came, and the Commercial Advertiser of April 16, 1819, contained, under the head of "Deaths," this notice:

"Yesterday, at the house of Elijah Ward, Oliver Evans, Esq., of Philadelphia, in his sixty-fourth year."

That was the end. The body was buried at the old Zion burying ground, whence many years later it was removed to Cypress Hills, Long Island, where it rests now in an unmarked grave. Oliver Evans is forgotten, but his works live after him, and the automobilists of America should find his last resting place and erect over it a monument worthy of the man.—William J. Lampton in New York Herald.

STYLES IN WOMEN'S GOWNS A SUBJECT FOR ARGUMENT

An interesting question is suggested by the address of the clergyman who, the other day, poured the vials of his wrath upon the immodesty, foolishness and extravagance of the fashions of the period.

"In the most degraded days of France," said he, "the gowns of women were not nearly so low, so given to falling away as is considered good form in society to-day."

Now, if the morals of the French Revolution are the goal of womankind at present, it would be a great relief to know if they are to be pre- or post-revolutionary morals. In fashion, these two varieties were quite as different as the clothes with which they were worn.

The fashions of the first period were elegant, elaborate and magnificent; those of the second, of a bold and unashamed simplicity; but it must be conceded that they were alike in the particular that they showed bodices of the lowest cut.

Even in those days, however, a pretty woman occasionally covered her neck from the public gaze and even had her portrait painted in a high bodice. Two examples are given in one of the pictures. Was this departure from the usual custom prompted by extreme modesty? In the case of the larger portrait, at least, that of

1830

Madame de Pompadour, one is inclined to think not and to suspect that that astute person had some other reason.

The extraordinary frankness of the Directory fashions is too well known to need description, but it is doubtful if the low cut of the shortwaisted bodices was by any means their worst feature. They at least had a small covering for the upper part of the arm, but the V shaped corsage of the '80s had not the vestige of a sleeve and was very low in the neck besides.

In fact, for sheer stinginess of covering those V-shaped bodices were unique, and yet the days of the '80s are, on the whole, held to be extremely respectable ones.

What about that reign of the low necked frock in the early half of the nineteenth century, that period when respectability was enthroned and excessive refinement, not to say squeamishness and prudery, was the order of the day? During that period gowns were worn low morning, noon and

The Modern Decolletage.

night, and in full dress had that falling away effect which the clerical critic quoted so much deplores, to an extent which surely is not equaled to-day.

As a final bit of evidence, contemplate the costume of those refined and artistic peoples with no morals worth speaking of, the ancient Greeks and the Italians of the Middle Ages.

The bosom is covered, the throat only modestly exposed and the body clothed with voluminous and stately draperies.

Things are not always what they seem to be in this world. An authority on the psychology of modesty and clothing believes "that the genesis of modesty is to be found in the activity in the midst of which it appears and that it has primarily no connection with clothing whatever."—New York Sun.

The Affectionate Poor.

"The poor have exceedingly warm affections, an dare easily guided by them. On one occasion," says a woman philanthropist, in Everybody's Magazine for January, "when I had argued for an hour with a quarreling husband and wife without bringing reconciliation any nearer, I said: 'Well, you must go your own way, but you are simply breaking my heart with your foolishness.' I believe my voice trembled, for I was tired and discouraged. The man and the woman looked at each other, and then the woman said:

"'Indeed, miss, we didn't know we were hurting you—we wouldn't do that for worlds. John and me, and if it will make you happier, we'll try again.'

"As for their goodness to each other, it is beyond all praise. The nights spent in watching sick neighbors, though no rest can be looked for on the day that follows—the meals shared—'the nameless unremembered acts of kindness and of love'—one has to live among them to realize these."

The Real "Pina" Gauze.

"Pina" gauze, made by the women of the Philippines from pineapple

1840

1850

spikes alone, is as delicate as chiffon and far more durable. They use only the best leaves and these, tied into bundles, are placed under heavy stones in the bed of a running stream. After two or three days of this treatment they are exposed for a time to the action of sun and air. Each piece is closely inspected to make sure that the process of decomposition was thorough, and if it was not the leaves are subjected a second time to the operation. The fibrous threads are at last wholly separate from the cellulose and lignose particles and cleaned from the sap and gummy substance. The whole is then beaten with a wooden mallet, grooved on the faces like a fluting machine. The threads are kept moist while this beating is in progress and the separate threads are thus blended into one mass. In color the fibers vary from cream and light gray to pure white. After the "pineapple cloth" is finished figures are stamped on it with blocks and afterward worked or embroidered by hand.

She Was Grateful.

Mr. Brown's business kept him so occupied during the daytime that he had little opportunity to enjoy the society of his own children. When some national holiday gave him a day of leisure his young son was usually his chosen companion. One day, however, Mr. Brown, reproached by the wistful eyes of his 7-year-old daughter, reversed the order of things, and invited the little girl to go with him for a long walk.

She was a shy, silent, small person, and during the two hours' stroll not a single word could Mr. Brown induce the little maid to speak, but her shining eyes attested that she appreciated his efforts to amuse her; indeed, she fairly glowed with suppressed happiness.

Just before they reached home, however, the child managed, but only after a tremendous struggle with her inherent timidity, to find words to express her gratitude.

"Papa, what flower do you like best?" she asked.

"Why, I don't know, my dear—sunflowers, I guess."

"Then," cried the little girl, beaming with gratitude, "that's what I'll plant on your grave."—Woman's Home Companion.

His Tin Lark.

One day Miss Bailey brought her Shelley down and read his "Ode to the Skylark."

"Now, don't you think that's a pretty thing?" she asked. "Did you hear how the lark went singing, bright and clear, up and up and up into the blue sky?"

The children were carefully attentive, as ever, but responsive. Morris Mogilewsky felt that he alone understood the nature of this story. It was meant to amuse; therefore it was polite that one should be amused.

"Teacher fools," he chuckled. 'Larks ain't singin' in skies."

'How do you know?" asked Miss Bailey.

"'Cause we got a lark by our house. It's a from tin lark mit a cover."

"A tin lark! With a cover!" Miss Bailey exclaimed, "Are you sure, dear, that you know what you are talking about?"

"Teacher, yiss, ma'am, I know," Morris began deliberately. "My papa, he has a lark. It's a from tin lark mit a cover. Und it's got a handle, too. Und my papa he takes it all times on the store for buy a lark a beer."

"Lager beer! O, shade of Shelley!" groaned Miss Bailey's spirit, but aloud she only said: "No, my dear, I wasn't reading about lager beer. A lark is a little bird."—McClure's.

Ode to the Hen.

Of robin and skylark and linnet, spring poets write page after page; their praises are sounded each minute by prophet, soothsayer and sage; but not since the stars sang together, not since the creation of men, has anyone drawn a goose feather in praise of the patient old hen.

All honor and praise to the singing that cheers up the wildwood in spring; the old recollection soft bringing joy, childhood, and that sort of thing; but dearer to me than the twitter of robin or martin or wren is the motherly cluck when a litter of chickens surround the old hen.

And her mid-winter cackle, how cheery, above the new nest she has made; it notifies hearts all aweary, another fresh egg has been laid; and when the old bird waxes heavy and aged and lazy and fat, well cooked, with good stuffing and gravy, there's great consolation in that.—London Answers.

Would Profit by His Death.

One of the newest of Senator Depew's stories is that of a man who resides at Peekskill and who is known thereabout for his sporting proclivities.

He was recently invited by a friend,

That Falling Away Effect.

the owner of a fine sloop, to go sailing on the Hudson. A squall came up, and during the excitement that ensued the owner of the sloop was pitched into the water. While the man overboard was struggling for his life, the friend, who could not swim, and who therefore made no attempt to go to the rescue of his companion, peered anxiously over the side of the vessel.

"Aby! Aby!" he called out excitedly, when his friend's head appeared above the water for an instant, "if you don't come up for the third time can I have the boat?"

What Capers Are.

The caper of commerce is the pickled flower bud of a shrub that grows in waste places of southern Europe. Marseilles alone exports about $5,000 worth per year to the United States. The business of raising and preparing capers might well be taken up in California, the arid lands of the southwest and some of the southern states.—Country Life in America.

Saw His Finish.

There was an old man who said "Gee!
My life's been one long jamboree.
I've hit such a gait
That I feel, I may state,
There's a hot finish coming to me."
—Princeton Tiger.

Wanted Good Luck.

"Some women," said the Chestnut street reserve, "are so superstitious that they seem to think it's bad luck to pass a pin without picking it up. When the streets are crowded with shoppers you would think they wouldn't have much time to bother with such things, but that's where you are wrong. There was a perfect blockade at my corner this morning, all caused by an elderly female who had caught sight of a pin lying on the pavement. At once she flopped down without any regard for the other people who were walking along, and tried to pick it up. She wore gloves, and the pin eluded her grasp. Again and again she attempted to capture it, but it always managed to escape her. Of course, all this only took a few moments, but already there was quite a block, and people were walking in the street to get around her. Finally what did she do but deliberately remove the glove from her right hand, pick up the pin with her bare fingers and stock it into the lapel of her coat. And, having satisfied herself, traffic was once more resumed."—Philadelphia Record.

Strength of Paper Money.

That the paper money of the United States endures a vast amount of rough and careless handling is a fact that must have been impressed upon any one who has ever observed the manner in which the average cashier pulls and jerks the bills he counts before pushing them through the window to the waiting patron, says the Saturday Evening Post.

A single treasury note measures 3⅛ inches in width by 7¼ inches in length. It will sustain, without breaking, lengthwise, a weight of 41 pounds; crosswise, a weight of 91 pounds. The notes run four to a sheet—a sheet being 8¾ inches wide by 13½ inches long. One of the sheets lengthwise will suspend 108 pounds, and crosswise 177 pounds.

It will be noted that a single note is capable of sustaining, crosswise, a weight of 91 pounds, which is twice the amount, by nine pounds, of the weight the note can sustain lengthwise; while in the case of the sheet, the crosswise sheet lacks 39 pounds of double the sustaining power of the lengthwise sheet.

Had Pride in Her Town.

"A young North Carolina girl gave me a center shot the other day as a token of that pride of locality which is more pronounced in the South than elsewhere," said Mr. Henry O. Conners of Baltimore, at the Ebbitt.

"It was quite a small place, but it boasted one very fine hotel, at which I stopped all night. After a good breakfast I paid my bill to the grown daughter of the lady who ran the tavern and who was quite up in the duties of a cashier.

"'You have a nice little town here, miss,' said I, trying to make friends with the good-looking clerk, 'but I must say that I never knew there was such a town on the map till the Southern Railroad landed me here yesterday.'

"Eying me coolly and looking me squarely in the eye, the Tarheel maiden said: 'Where be you from, mister?' I owned up to Baltimore, and this is what she handed me: 'Well, I reckon there's lots of folks in Baltimore that are just as ignorant as you.'"—Washington Post.